

APPENDIX I – Environmental Assessment

Standard Environmental Information: Pertinent information of sufficient scope and depth must be provided so that the State can accurately assess the impact of the project and determine whether or not an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) is required. **Indicate what sources provided information (DEP, Fish & Wildlife, Town Planner, etc.).** Whenever possible, impact should be quantified (i.e., number of acres of trees to be removed, cubic yards of fill required. Etc.). For projects with property rights outstanding, the standard environmental information must be expanded to specifically explain how the outstanding rights are to be dealt with and how the participant plans to assure that the environment will not be impacted significantly.

The three points to be covered are:

1. **Description of the Proposed Action:** This will serve as an introduction and description of the proposed action, and what is designed to be accomplished, including any mitigating measures designed to minimize environmental harm. It should include such information as the location of the project, its scope, when the action is to take place, and, if applicable, its interrelationship with other Federal, State, or Local projects or proposals.

2. **Description of the Environment:** This section will include a description of the existing environment and the probable future environment of the project site and its surroundings without implementation of the proposed action. Topics to be considered are:

- A. Land Use (describe project site and surrounding areas in terms of use; *ex. residential, commercial etc*)
- B. Fish and wildlife

Vegetation

- D. Geology and soils
- E. Mineral resources
- F. Air and water quality
- G. Water resources/hydrology
- H. Historic/archeological resources
- I. Transportation/Access

3. **The Environmental Impact of the Proposed Action:** This section will be an objective discussion of the environmental impact of the proposed action, including further related actions, if any, which are contemplated. “Impacts” are defined as direct or indirect changes to the existing environment, whether beneficial or adverse. To the extent that it applies, the discussion will include impacts of the action, including environmental damage which could be caused by users, upon economic, cultural esthetic, and social conditions as well as upon the physical and biological environment. Elements on which impacts are unknown or only partially understood should be indicated. Any off-site impacts, such as increased traffic on neighborhood roads or increased noise levels in surrounding areas should be described.

This section should be developed through an analysis of sections (1) and (2). If section (1) and (2) are properly developed, a comparative study of these sections will indicate the impacts of the project upon the environment where the project is to be located. An impact would not appear in this section that is not based upon information presented in the previous sections. All impacts will be discussed in this section. This will specifically include a discussion of each adverse impact (not of any mitigation measures actually proposed in section 1).

A few suggestions to keep in mind.

- 1. Keep the information free of project justification and personal bias. The project presumably is fully justified in the documentation.
- 2. Do not rely on generalities. The specific facts are essential. General statements and all allegations should always be supported and quantified where possible.
- 3. Liberal use of photos, sketches, and related graphics to help explain the project are of great value. Pictures (particularly aerial photography) reduce lengthy narrative materials.
- 4. Writing should be clear and concise. Adverse impacts should be addressed as fairly as the beneficial impacts.